A painting of the Guadalupe Mission in the 1850s. The Presidio del Paso del Rio Norte can be seen to the right in the far background.

Ciudad Juárez:

As 17th-century Spanish explorers sought a route through the southern Rocky Mountains, the Franciscan Friar García de San Francisco founded Ciudad Juárez in 1659 as "El Paso del Norte" ("The North Pass"). The Misión de Guadalupe de los Mansos en el Paso del río del Norte became the first permanent Spanish development in the area in the 1660s. The Franciscan friars established a community that grew in importance as commerce between Santa Fe and Chihuahua passed through it. The wood for the first bridge across the Rio Grande came from **Santa Fe, New Mexico**, in the late 18th century. The original population of Mansos, Suma, Jumano, and other natives from the south brought by the Spanish from Central New Spain grew around the mission.

The population of the entire district was close to 5,000 in 1750 when the Apache attacked the other native towns and ranchos around the missions.

During the Mexican–American War, the Battle of El Bracito took place nearby on Christmas Day, 1846. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo established the Rio Grande as the border between Mexico and the United States. The main channel of the Rio Grande had moved southwestward leaving the settlements of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elzeario on the Camino Real on the north bank of the river, isolated from the rest of the towns, in Texas.
Benito Juárez monument located in central Juárez

Other settlements on the east bank of the Rio Grande were not part of a town at that time; as the U.S. Army set up its installations settlements grew around it. This would later become **El Paso, Texas.** From that time until around 1930, populations on both sides of the border moved freely across it.

Old Mesilla - New Mexico:

Hwy 28, San Miguel, New Mexico: